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Professor Defends Use of Lie Detector, Raps Psychiatrists

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Staff Reporter

A lie detector test is no more of an intrusion into the mind of an individual than is the probing of a psychiatrist, a House subcommittee was told yesterday.

Fred E. Inbau, a law professor at Northwestern University, said the tests in no way violate constitutional protections.

While testifying before a House Government Operation subcommittee, Inbau was questioned about a letter sent to the subcommittee by Dr. H. B. Dearman, former chief resident psychiatrist at the University of Virginia.

Dr. Dearman, who now practices in Johnson City, Tenn., said polygraph tests violate the search and seizure sections of the Fourth Amendment and the self incrimination section of the Fifth Amendment.

The subcommittee is studying the use of lie detector tests by Federal agencies.

Dr. Dearman discounted the argument by the proponents of lie detectors that they do not violate constitu-

tional guarantees because no one is forced to take the test.

He said the person being examined does not realize that not only will his conscious responses be recorded but his unconscious thoughts also will be delved into. The subject of such a test will be giving automatic responses to thoughts of which he is totally unaware, Dr. Dearman said.

In his letter, the psychiatrist also contended that the polygraph is "used mainly as a mental blackjack to obtain a confession."

After he was read the letter, Inbau declared that no psychiatrist has the right to set himself up as an expert on the Constitution.

Inbau said that in considering whether lie detector tests are good or bad, the subcommittee should keep in mind that tests have been used to weed out thieves and narcotic addicts from applicants for police jobs in the Chicago suburbs.

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